



ISAA

National Newsletter

Independent Scholars Association of Australia Inc

The Boab tree is self-sustaining; it draws on its own resources

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MEMBERSHIP

\$80—Full members
\$50—Concessional
\$140—Household
\$75—Concessional Household

President's Report

Welcome to the November 2023 Newsletter.

By the time you are reading this report, the ISAA special general meeting and the AGM will have taken place, and the new ISAA Council will be in place. I also anticipate that the revised ISAA Constitution will have been adopted. It may take time to fully embrace the possibilities for taking part in research-based presentations online and sharing our research with others whom we may never meet in the embodied sense, but already we see some members engaging in this way.

As this first year of my term as President draws to a close, I'd like to thank those who have supported me as I've come to terms with the role and who have facilitated ISAA activities in the past year. I'm not going to list everyone here – "you know who you are". But, I will say a particular thank you to Christine Yeats who makes sure that this Newsletter comes out regularly and has varied and interesting content.

Please note the Call for Contributions for the next issue of the *ISAA Review*, which appeared in the last issue of the ISAA Newsletter. The call for nominations for a new Editorial Advisory Board, from which a new Editor will be identified, is still open. Along with planning for the ISAA Conference 2024, the revitalisation of ISAA publications, including the *ISAA Review*, will be priorities for the new ISAA Council.

PYC Corner

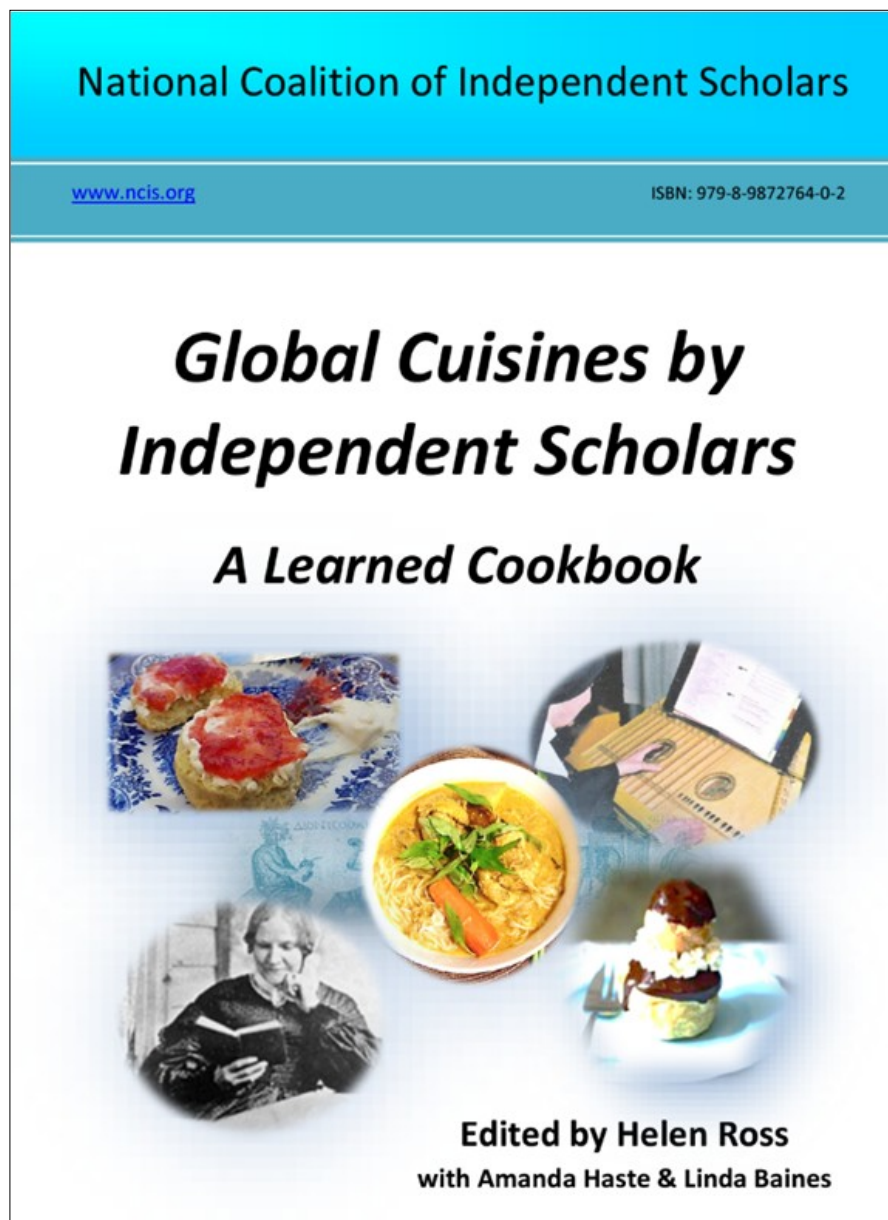
Expertise comes in many forms and is acknowledged in very many different ways. For us as scholars, that acknowledgement usually comes in the form of "publication" – the making public of our knowledge and expertise.

This time last year, the National Coalition of Independent Scholars published *Global Cuisines by Independent Scholars; a Learned Cookbook*, with its 'insights into different foods, traditions, and food-related experiences, through brief essays – some scholarly, some personal accounts – each of which has a related recipe'. You can find it here: [https://www.ncis.org/sites/default/files/NCIS%20COOKBOOK Dec2022.pdf](https://www.ncis.org/sites/default/files/NCIS%20COOKBOOK%20Dec2022.pdf)

President's report cont.

The essay by Helen Ross on the West Country of England's big debate on whether you put the jam or the cream first on scones brought home memories for me as someone born and brought up in the West Country. In my mother's family, if you had butter and jam (strawberry of course – and home-made, naturally), then you put the butter first and savoured the jam. If you had clotted cream, then you put the jam first; I always thought that was so that you could show off the expertise – yours or someone else's – involved in making the cream. But then, my maternal grandmother came from London, and as we know from Eric Hobsbawm's work, traditions are largely "invented".

*Dr Hilary Yerbury
ISAA National President*



News from ISAA NSW

On October 26 Monica Dennison spoke at the second Work In Progress meeting for the year on the topic of *Invisibilities and Archives: fresh insights into the poetry of Hopkins and his nineteenth-century French poetic contemporaries, Rimbaud and Laforgue*. The meeting was held in the Flinders Room of the State Library and was an engaging event which was followed for most by lunch in Café Trim upstairs.

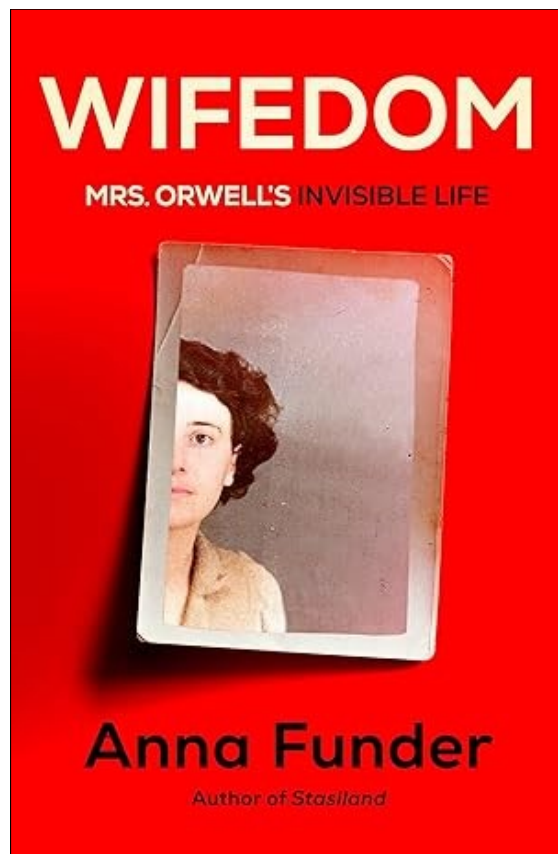
Our next event was a Doing Research meeting held via Zoom on 2 November when Dr Dean Ashenden spoke about his approach to researching his award winning book *Telling Tennant's Story*. The meeting was attended by members from three states and Dean's talk promoted a lively discussion of the long lasting processes of colonialism in Australia as manifested at the local level and how to make non-First Nations people aware of them. Dean advocated a cooperative approach to auditing the history of each local region.

The Biography Reading Group met via Zoom in October and discussed *Wifedom* by Anna Funder but due to absences by various members the Public Affairs Reading Group did not meet in October or November as scheduled and will start up again in February 2024.

The annual Christmas Lunch will take place at Barracks on Barrack on 7 December.

The first Work in Progress Meeting will be held on 9 February at the State Library when Dr Ian Willis will speak on *The memory landscape of the Cowpastures in memorials, monuments, and murals*. Following that a Workshop is scheduled for 19 March on *Modern Slavery* at which a panel of members will speak and to which all are invited. It is pleasing to see that ISAA NSW continues to attract new members and we hope to see more of them attending our events in 2024.

Dr Christine Jennett
Chair ISAA NSW



Membership Growth Marketing Strategy for ISAA

For much of this year a group of members, led by Deirdre Baker, has been working on a strategy and implementation timeline to retain current members and to increase membership. This has now been endorsed by Council.

The full strategy is on the website but the following is a summary:

Terms of Reference:

- to identify and implement strategies for engaging with existing members
- to identify and implement strategies for recruiting new members, and
- to build mutually beneficial relationships with organisations sharing the values of ISAA.

Who are Independent Scholars?:

- a network of active scholars in many areas; book and journal publications; film and documentary script writing and production; journalism. In sum, they make a contribution to national understanding and debate: for example research oriented graduates, retired academics, historians, novelists, social scientists, informal writers, public servants, scientists, NGOs, large organisations, scholars from diverse disciplines, and
- people who undertake independent scholarly work outside the nation's formal institutions of education and research.

What are the benefits to members?:

- as an ISAA member you become part of a collective, scholarly community who:
- makes a vital contribution to the cultural and intellectual life of Australia through interests in humanities, arts, sciences; and exchanges ideas of significance
- encourages and promotes scholarship, stimulates public debate and provides links to other scholars
- promotes members' books, journal articles and other scholarly outputs in the website, newsletters and through social media
- creates a collective voice about interests of national concern in the public arena, and
- supports members by providing avenues for presentations, publications and opinion pieces through which members can progress their varied ideas and research, inspiring other members.

The full set of documents to be uploaded to the website go on to provide suggestions for enhancing and expanding current marketing strategies.

As part of the marketing strategy the QR code below provides a link to the website.

Ian Keese and Deirdre Baker
ISAA National Council



2024 National Conference



Photograph provided by Ian Keese

Please put the date for the 2024 ISAA Conference on your calendar.

After a few years of interruptions and adaptations, this is a chance to revive the great tradition of the National Conference. The dates, now confirmed, are **Thursday 24 and Friday 25 October, 2024**. The Conference will focus on developments within Australia and its place in the world in the sixty or so years following Federation. I am also working on us having special access to some of the Library's archives.

Apart from preparing the ground for the Immigration Restriction Act, the Federal Councils focused on the distribution of powers between the new Federal Government and the former colonies and an outline of a Federal Voting system (although one that did not grant women in most states voting rights).

By the end of the 1950s some important developments had taken place. These included the concept of a Basic Wage, the (narrow) defeat of a Referendum to ban the Communist Party, the (narrow) success of the 1946 "Social Services" referendum and the 1958 ending of the Immigration Restriction Act. Many trends came to fruition during the 1960s.

There are many areas to explore (in which some of our own early ISAA members were involved):

- Beginning of a knowledge of our Indigenous past
- Representations of a changing identity in literature, the arts and history
- Contributions to scientific and medical knowledge
- Beginning of an environmental awareness
- Institutions such as the National Library and National Gallery.

I am very open to ideas you may have of topics or activities that could be part of the Conference. I would also be looking for someone to take over or share the organising of the National Conference in following years.

Ian Keese
Conference Organiser

Scholarly Reflections

This issue includes the following Scholarly Reflections

John Canning — *The need for urgent, protected whistle-blowing legislation*

Aedeen Cremin — *Justinian's Flea: Plague, Empire and the Birth of Europe*

Jim Hodges — *How the Universe Works: Fact and Appearance in Physics and Cosmology*

Alan Roberts — *Writing Academic English and its Alternatives*

The views and opinions expressed in the articles published in the Scholarly Reflections are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of ISAA.



An Old Scholar at His Desk—Style of Rembrandt van Rijn (National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC USA)

Scholarly Reflections

The need for urgent, protected whistle-blowing legislation

Authors

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The Dawkins 'reforms' 30 yrs ago (1) shaped universities towards semi-autonomous mass education, but also gave them a seal with a long shadow of continuing repercussions. Semi-autonomy would no longer be exercised by academics governing their own institutions with effective control over their own disciplines, as they still do in the majority of western democracies: they have been replaced by corporate managers with reduced understanding of education. Although John Dawkins later acknowledged that his 'reforms' are out of date, his last calls for complete fee deregulation and lower attrition rates (2) along with shaping current policies (3) reflect continued ignorance of the greater societal role education fulfils in a time of serious global upheaval. Management self-regulated autonomy, combined with inadequate public funding, has produced an over reliance on international student income that has perverted the delivery of local education. With a global market outlook, Australian universities behave as corporations whilst operating as government subsidised charities but without government accountability; legally public entities, but no longer in practice. This has led to minimising reputation risk through an unwritten statute that silences dissent and whistle-blowers.

Since 2019 under the guise of the Covid pandemic the Australian university sector witnessed a horrific, largely opportunistic purge of 40,000+ academic staff (4) (5) that saw indiscriminate terminations of both casual and full-time staff, professional and academic. Non-meritorious decisions fuelled by local politics and power plays, they are driven and protected by perceived global market interests. Those redundancies included international scholars unceremoniously dismissed and driven out. That scale of attrition has further eroded the quality & standards of all Australian tertiary education. In practice, alleged 'market' interests are focussed not on genuine product quality but on maximising profit. To the observer, they appear to have made the already disastrous seal hermetic.

Our corporate/charity chimera universities, without the normal checks and balances of shareholder accountability, are destroying the commitment to academia and academic freedom of which whistle-blowers are its remaining vanguard. Vice-Chancellors, steered by governing councils now made up of academically inexperienced but seasoned board members (or a phenomenon where some sit on multiple boards that generate conflicts of interest), have created governance structures that have disenfranchised the wider academic collegiate, egregiously rewarding themselves in the process, so much so that one was referred to ICAC.(6) They have become unaccountable to students, academics, and alumni of the university and increasingly unaccountable to the community that subsidises them. What a university is supposed to be has almost been redefined out of existence.

Higher education has more whistle-blowing cases than other sectors in our society. Calls for an ombudsman go back to the mid-1990s but crystallised in a 2001 parliamentary inquiry,(7) building on

Scholarly Reflections cont.

other concerns an ombudsman can deal with,(8) including student-university grievances,(9) but this was never enacted, making Dawkin's most recent anti-senate comments disturbing. Yet there is precedence: the Australian National University, having been established under Commonwealth legislation, is subject to the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth Ombudsman pursuant to the Ombudsman Act 1976.

There is not only a need for an ombudsman but also for a national education commission to oversee governance before an ombudsman needs to step in, after which it can be too late. Such a commission must differ from current bodies that are too heavily influenced by government and business links to be truly independent of the Vice-Chancellors and their governing councils. Significantly, there is also a need for effective protection of whistle-blowers, including a tort for the prosecution of retaliation against whistle-blowers with personal liability of the perpetrators. Under the veil of Covid, it is striking how people have been terminated on extraordinarily irrelevant pretexts after raising concerns, with a retrenchment package to prevent revelations including the inappropriate use of non-disclosure agreements. Retaliation is whistle-blowing's signature, and the best measure of the severity of a problem. There can be no greater retaliation against a whistle-blower than to sack them,(10) (11) demonstrating just how vicious internal self-regulation can be. As with other sectors, the education sector has now consistently demonstrated that it is unable to self-regulate appropriately. Self-regulation within universities should occur through academics and students being free to debate issues of importance to them, with management embraced outcomes. It is no longer an isolated question of compartmentalised breaches of democratic order: growing public awareness of and concern about the lack of effective protections (12) of whistle-blowers acting in the public interest has compelled the current Prime Minister to consider further protections, an important initial recognition of a genuine problem.

The decline in the commitment to truth and freedom at our universities has come at a price, putting their societal function and Australian democracy at risk. This article is documenting a brief but important analysis of a contemporary problem with whistleblowing and where it stemmed from. There is significant historical meaning in the future when people look back to try and understand how the education system was gotten so badly wrong for so long. It's conclusion that historical changes have unconsidered, and sustained, consequences decades later means further research is needed to investigate the real impact on whistleblowing that such reforms create. Consequently, the implications on government policy planning need to be revisited in serious depth if the oft-repeated cycle of harm to Australia, and indeed the world, is to be broken.

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Scholarly Reflections cont.

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Scholarly Reflections cont.

Justinian's Flea: Plague, Empire and the Birth of Europe

William Rosen

London: Pimlico Random House 2008

ISBN: 978-1-8441-3744-2, 367 pages

This is a story for our times, well told. Few people knew the word 'pandemic' in 2008, now we use it every day. 'War in the Holy Land', surely a thing of the past? Alas, no. Rosen probably did not intend to be a prophet and does not quite explain why he wrote this book. But it's good that he did. He describes a key phase in the history of the Western world, based on scholarship which is both traditional (using Josephus, Procopius, Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* etc) and up-to-date (bacteriology, epidemiology etc). And does it in picturesque language. He uses the word 'scant' as a verb, meaning 'undervalue', and describes *Yersinia*, the plague bacterium, as picking up 'bits of DNA floating around the bacterial liquisphere like loose pages of a manuscript'. I find this amusing, others find it objectionable: Warren Treadgold, Professor of Byzantine Studies is scathing about 'portentous sentences filled with metaphors and clichés' (review in *The Historian* 71.1 (2009), 172-73, online).

Rosen was never a teacher, but he has a genius for exposition, whether it be the architectonics of Hagia Sophia, the legal principles of Justinian's Laws, the life and times of the Sassanid kings, or that of the plague-flea and its little ratty friends. The book proceeds at a relatively slow pace, introducing us to Justinian and his talent for picking the right man for the job, especially generals (Belisarius, Narses etc.), thanks to whom he was able to regain parts of northern Africa and Italy in the 530s. *Yersinia* arrives about midway through the book, with very clear explanations of its functioning. It spread to Constantinople in 542 and again in 558. Rosen calls *Yersinia* 'the demon', an effective image. In the 550s the demon attacks Gallia, now transformed into Frankia, and even reaches Ireland — with references here not just to Bede but also to the *Annals of Tigernach*. The story now moves east to Persia, which seems a shade out-of-place until we realise that both Roman and Persian lands are going to be affected by plague, effectively hampering their military operations.

Then follows the 'Birth of Europe' segment, which says that peasants in western lands acquired some measure of independence from their lords, because they were fewer and thus more valuable. Lack of labour also forced technological innovation, which enabled western society to develop as it has done. The Black Death was said to have had the same effect, a millennium later. As I am allergic to the One Big Cause, I started to part company with Rosen at that point. In my time the OBC was the use of metals — until we noticed that the Maya managed to feed and massacre one another without their help.

The book accelerates when Justinian dies in 565, leaving no heir. Why? Did he think the Apocalypse was at hand? We're only told that 'even more than most autocrats [he] was convinced of his own immortality'. I very much doubt that, but OK.

The demon strikes again in the 580s and 590s, but it never enters the Arabian Peninsula. From the 630s on, therefore, the forces of Islam have a basically clear field from Spain to Sind. This creates a new geopolitical landscape which extends throughout central Asia to the borders of China, which was also plague-free. We are now far removed from Justinian, and this last section, a 10-page long Epilogue, could well have been omitted.

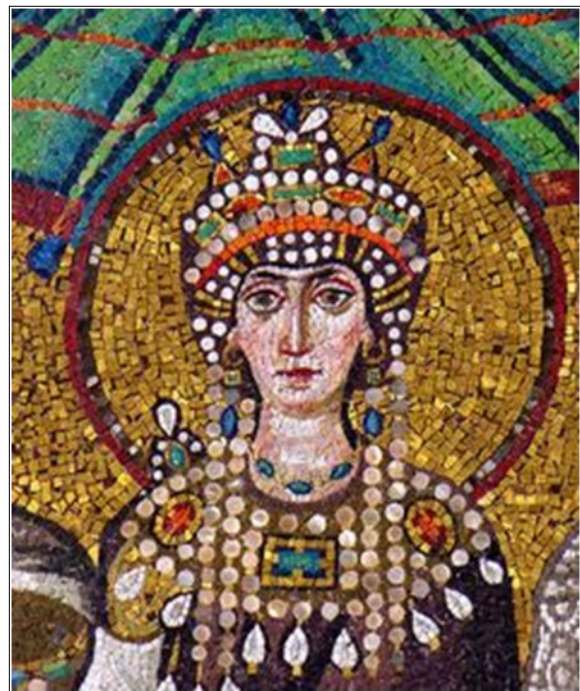
Rosen acknowledges the help of several editor and readers. It's a great shame that none of them noticed that the map of the Roman Empire is disastrously inaccurate. It shows the site of the Battle of Dara, in 530 CE, about 280 miles west of Nisibis — by my reckoning, since there is no scale (why?) — whereas the text makes clear that Dara was only about 10 miles away from the city. Indeed, that was the point, that taking Dara, as Belisarius famously did, would defeat the local Persians. This shook my

Scholarly Reflections cont.

very detailed paper by Christopher Lillington-Martin, 'Archaeological and ancient literary evidence for a battle near Dara Gap, Turkey, AD 530' (2007, online).

Dara is correctly located on Rosen's map of Sassanid Persia—which does have a scale—but that map doesn't show Edessa (besieged 544 by the Persians), while the Roman Empire map does not show Ancona (besieged 551 by the Romans). There are a couple of other proofreading errors, not many, but as Rosen spent most of his working life in publishing he should have been better served by his former colleagues. There are also some ludicrous academic errors, listed by Treadgold in his 2009 review, but that is fairly normal in a work of popularization. To me, the important thing is that Rosen did manage to make an obscure topic 'popular' and, ultimately, one hopes, make more people aware of this forgotten past.

William Rosen died in 2016, aged 77, having written three other monumental works: on James Watt's steam engine (2010), on climate change and medieval famine (2015) and on the discovery of antibiotics (2017).



The Roman Emperor Justinian and his wife Theodora, 547 CE, a year before Theodora's death.

Detail from mosaic friezes, c. 264x365 cm,

Church of S. Vitale, Ravenna, Italy.

Aedeen Cremin

ISAA ACT

Scholarly Reflections cont.

How the Universe Works: Fact and Appearance in Physics and Cosmology

As the dough of a plum pudding swells in the oven, the imbedded plums are carried away from each other at a speed proportional to their distance apart ('Hubble proper motion'). But unlike the plums in a pudding, the galaxies, stars and planets can forge their way through the space-dough surrounding them ('Hubble peculiar motion') – a motion which is detected as bipolar redshift in the Cosmic Microwave Background emitted by the primordial plasma cloud enclosing the universe.

Specifically, whenever CMB redshift is unequal on opposite sides of the universe, the observer knows he is burrowing through the Hubble space-dough in the direction of least redshift. For the Earth, minimum redshift is in the direction of constellation Leo, and this peculiar speed varies in an annual cycle from 340 km/s in June to 400 km/s in December – a variation resulting from algebraically summing (a) the Earth being dragged by the Sun in the direction of Leo (370 km/s) and (b) the Earth orbiting the Sun (30 km/s).

To eliminate his peculiar motion an astronaut has to set course with Leo in his rear-view mirror and with the Sun receding at 370 km/s, at which speed and direction the CMB redshift will be equal on all sides, thus ensuring his starship is at rest in its surrounding space-dough. The starship's atomic clock will then tick at cosmic standard time, useful for correcting errors in terrestrial standard time arising from Lorentz clock-slowness caused by the Earth's motion through the space-dough.

When at rest in the space-dough all light is at speed ' c ', unlike light relative to the Earth where from the direction of Leo it varies from $(c + 340)$ km/s to $(c + 400)$ km/s between June and December. Remarkably, erroneous terrestrial time-keeping and simultaneity conspire to produce faux light isotropy in the Global Positioning System's Earth-centred non-rotating frame, along with creating the false impression that GPS satellite clocks rates slow down as a result of motion in that frame.

Space is a spooky invisible elastic-solid stuff which has the function of: 1) transmitting shear waves also known as light, 2) producing shear strain aka magnetism, 3) producing rarefaction/compaction aka positive and negative charge, 4) producing tiny standing wave 'particles' of internal compaction/rarefaction aka protons and electrons, 5) producing clusters of these particles aka atoms, 6) producing diverse aggregates of atoms aka solids, liquids, gases and plasmas, 7) producing the phenomenon of inertia, and 8) endowing the above items with such properties they will act in concert to generate stars and planets.

The light/matter medium and its linked psychic medium are ingenious inventions by a hyper-powerful super-intelligence to facilitate the evolution of creatures with various levels of consciousness. But the universe wasn't necessarily created by a 'DEITY' – it may have been constructed by an incredibly advanced deep-time alien civilization, and set running in self-sustaining cosmological cycles of expansion and compression?

Science has many questions to answer, so let's get on with it, and in future make a distinction between fact and appearance.

Jim Hodges
ISAA Member

Scholarly Reflections cont.

Writing Academic English and its Alternatives

When I encountered a recent complaint that my writing was 'academic' – a common term of disparagement for some writing – it set me to thinking what that word really means.

Synonyms that occur to me are serious (i.e. overly serious), often humourless, unnecessarily detailed or abstract, consequently sometimes long-winded, addressing questions or providing information that few readers have any interest in. A lot depends on the degree of the supposed problem: some seriousness may be fine but, please, not too much! Not too much for the purpose of the writing.

A lot depends on the intended audience. No-one minds if something written for an academic audience is 'academic' in style. Some writing has to be academic if it is intended for a specialist audience who won't want their time wasted by anything that is not strictly to the point. And as scholarly disciplines have developed, the amount of specialised writing has increased.

The issue of academic style is most critical with writing for a more general, less specialised, audience, writing which is unlikely to have a 'best seller' quality anyway. Leaving aside fictional writing where plot, suspense, surprise and similar qualities make a big difference to reader appeal, if you have a serious subject to communicate, the best formulation I know is to aim for the 'intelligent lay reader'. Such writing may well appeal and be useful to specialist readers but will also be attractive to people with a general curiosity about the subject, while recognising that many people never will be interested in it.

There are a number of ways to achieve this level of reader appeal:

- The subject should not be esoteric (i.e. other things being equal, having interest for few readers).
— The significance and importance of the subject should be communicated.

The writing must be made intelligible by

- ensuring clarity of thought and expression
- ensuring a reasonable though not excessive economy of words
- avoiding rarely-used words or anything that leaves the reader wondering what you mean
- avoiding things that create barriers to fluent reading. If the reader has to pause to work out what you are trying to say, you are well on the way to losing him/her.
- encouraging the reader's curiosity.

Keep the writing human-focused.

- the subject matter should be relatable at least to the reader's lived experience, if not that of most people
- encourage the reader's empathy – within reason
- note the significant consequences of the matter
- use humour and find ways to introduce light relief
- have a story to tell.

Keep the writing manageable

- Expression should be appropriately concise
- the writing should be broken up into intelligible units that do not look tiring or difficult to read (chapters, sections, sub-sections, paragraphs etc)
- the structure of the writing should have balance
- the writing should not challenge the reader's patience.

I am interested in learning how other ISAA members see academic writing and its alternatives.

Alan Roberts
ISAA member

Introducing new ISAA member Ron Popenhagen PhD

Publications, Presentations and Activities (2023 and recent past)

Publications

Popenhagen, Ron J., *Modernist Disguise: Masquerade in Modern Performance and Visual Culture* (Edinburgh University Press, 2021), Paperback Edition, November 2022.

Popenhagen, Ron J., 'Cú Chulainn Unbound', Chapter 4, *The Medieval Cultures of the Irish Sea and the North Sea: Manannán and his Neighbors* (Amsterdam University Press, 2019).

Popenhagen, Ron, 'Adolph Appia' (pp. 31-32), 'Comédie-Française' (pp. 124-125), 'François Delsarte' (pp. 150-151), 'Émile Jaques-Dalcroze' (p. 276), 'Rudolf Laban' (p. 323-324), *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Stage Actors and Acting* (Cambridge University Press, 2015).

Presentations

Ron Popenhagen, *Masquerade as Theatre in Francophonie: Africa, the Caribbean and France*, Invited Lecture with Photo Images, France-Florida Research Institute, University of Florida, Gainesville, USA, 10 February 2023.

Ron J. Popenhagen, *Eastern Landscapes: Contemporary Perspectives on Baltic Modernism and Savage Souls*, Lecture with Modern Art Images, Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies, AABS Australasian Chapter (20th Conference), 'The Baltic States in a Changing World', RMIT University, Melbourne, 8 October 2022.

Ron Popenhagen, *The Experience in Theatre, Music and Composition with its Social-Cultural Interpretations and Challenges* JR Monroy in Three-Dimensional-Dialogue with Ron Popenhagen (Australia), Eduardo Garrido (Spain/Mexico) and Byron Yasui (Hawaii, USA), LACCS-UK (London) Webinar Series: 'Culture, Art, Music and Society', 24 February 2022.

Book Launch

Modernist Disguise: Masquerade in Modern Performance and Visual Culture by Ron J. Popenhagen (online) from California State University Channel Islands, Camarillo; presentation for past and current colleagues in the Arts and Humanities at California State University Northridge (CSUN), the University of Kansas, the University of Southern California, Los Angeles (USC), the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) and the University of Sydney Conservatorium of Music, 31 January 2021.

Activities

Ron Popenhagen Book Project on Global Mask Performance and Body/Head Adornment in Arts and Culture, with recent research in Australia, Europe and the USA; project 'working title' is *Masks and Body Masking in Performance: Masquerade Lexicon*.

Recent Research

- Australian Museum, Sydney, Bilas—Living Culture: Body Adornment from Papua New Guinea (September 2023)
- Fowler Museum of Cultural History, UCLA, Los Angeles, Intersections: World Arts, Local Lives (May 2023)
- Musée de Quai Branly Jacques Chirac, Paris, Black Indians de la Nouvelle-Orléans (November 2022), and
- State Library of New South Wales, writing and elaboration on medical masking and COVID masking, 'Postmasking and the Exposed Face' following a presentation in 2020, Visual Dialogues: Images of the Masked Face in COVID, International Image Conference (online), University of New South Wales, Kensington, Sydney (September 2022).

Spotlight—New book by Julie Marcus PhD



Sex and Savagery in the Good Colony of South Australia 1836-1901, the new book by Julie Marcus, is now scheduled for publication by Wakefield Press (Adelaide) in March/April 2024.

Publisher's details

Wakefield Press: (Adelaide)

Phone: 08-8352 4455

Web: wakefieldpress.com.au

Written to be intelligible to a wider readership than that usually addressed by academic anthropologists the author uses research from a variety of academic disciplines (history, art history, anthropology) to build a new picture of the realities of colonisation. In particular, she shows the real violence of colonising South Australia and its impact on First Nation women. Sex and violence sit at the heart of this new telling of familiar old pioneering myths of origin. She shows how the good intentions of South Australian settlers were inevitably abandoned as the war for the land heated up and how those issues reverberate still today.

As one reader has remarked, This book shows how many were sacrificed for progress. Maybe now we can start to honour their loss and the survivors and culture that remains, just as we honour the Anzacs. This book uncovers that history and explains how and why it happened. Joanne Goode

Review by Dr Judy Lattas: 'This is a beautifully written book that carefully and relentlessly builds a compelling analysis around its central question: how could a colony that quite sincerely understood itself as "good" - respectful of God's morality and the social laws that grant human rights along with colonisation - be come so brutal? What is distinctive in Marcus's contribution to this record, in the lands that became South Australia and the Northern Territory, is her focus on the eroticisation, predation and sexual sadism that created embodied native subjects. This is a critically important work that deserves a wide public circulation.'

*Contributed by Julie Marcus
ISAA Member*

Spotlight—Professor Shirley Randell AO receives Edna Award

The EDNAs are awards for women of influence who have made a feminist difference – the battlers and the heroines who show commitment and determination in improving the lives of women and girls and whose activity advances the status of women. The Awards are named in honour of Edna Ryan who fought valiantly for equal pay and equal rights for women. In 2023, 17 women were awarded from a strong field of applicants.

Professor Shirley Randell AO was one of those celebrated in the Mentorship category. She was nominated by the Australia Society of Women Writers, whose aim is to empower and support each other, giving women a voice, and demonstrating the importance of women making a difference through writing their unique stories and experiences.

Edna Ryan was a leading activist and writer. Throughout her life, Edna was influential in blazing a trail for many women to follow - her activities, charisma and presence made a difference to many women as a wonderful role model. Together with Anne Conlon she researched and wrote the first history of the long agitation for Equal Pay in Australia, and subsequently researched and wrote about the arbitration movement in New South Wales. Edna's life and work required great resilience and strength.

Shirley, at the age of 83, is still writing and advocating for the rights of women in the Pacific, Asia, and Africa. By 2050, demographers expect that globally, there will be more people aged over 60 years than there are children under 18. As the Inaugural Ambassador of the National Older Women's Network, Shirley is passionate that advocacy for women continues to ensure that women at all stages of their lives are safe and can exercise their rights to live a fulfilling life. The Older Women's Network supports a United Nations Convention on the Rights for Older Persons. Older women, no matter what their circumstance, should be able to enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms, including full respect for their dignity, beliefs, needs and privacy, and for the right to make decisions about their care and the quality of their lives.

As a member of the Society of Women Writers, Shirley is continuing to gather her writing over many years for the National Library of Australia's Special Collections, and she is writing her family history and various speeches for national and international conferences. In her acceptance speech for the Ednas, she said 'I am an older woman who has grown bolder, stronger, and wiser through the love and support of my family, my ongoing education, and the amazing friends who continue to encourage and nurture me through my life journey. I am proud to be an advocate for women's rights and it is my privilege to be able to do so even now as an older woman'.

Contributed by Professor Shirley Randell AO

Shirley Randell's recent presentations and publications

Presentations

Shirley Randell, Acceptance Speech for the Edna Ryan Awards Ceremony, Sydney NSW, 16 November 2023, by Zoom, <https://youtu.be/u7rs-xKSu7I>.

Shirley Randell, Eulogy for William James Izett, Rockingham, Western Australia, 17 November 2023.

Book review

Shirley Randell, review of 'For Ukraine: By Women of the World', Paperback, June 2022, by Dr Diann Rodgers-Healey (Author), Prof Shirley Kaye Randell (Foreword) in *Women's Ink!* Autumn, 2023, pp 8-9.

Other

A report on Shirley Randell's award — *Edna Ryan AWARD: Celebrating women who have made a difference*, Society of Women Writers NSW Inc. Giving Women a Voice, Newsletter, December 2023.

Members' Publications, Presentations Activities and News

Darshi Arachige

Publication

(2023) *Lessons From The Life of Gregor Mendel, The Father of Genetics, About Intellectual Snobbishness, Thoughts and Ideas*, (<https://medium.com/indian-thoughts/lessons-from-the-life-of-gregor-mendel-the-father-of-genetics-about-intellectual-snobbishness-9ff536c7cb3c>) (Medium is a platform where anyone can write for money. Any non-member can see two articles free of charge in a month.)

Christine de Matos PhD

Publications

Christine de Matos with J. Heinemann, F. Sundevall & A. Ahlbäck, "Unpacking Coercion in Gendered War Labor" in special issue "Gender, War and Coerced Labor", edited by Heinemann, de Matos, Sundevall and Ahlbäck, *Labor History*, 64, no. 3 (2023): 225-237.

Christine de Matos with R. Ward, 'Forgotten Forced Migrants of War: Civilian Internment of Japanese in British India, 1941-6', *Journal of Contemporary History* 56, no. 4 (2021): 1102-1125.

Activities

Christine de Matos was recently awarded a small grant from Delegationen för militärhistorisk forskning (DMF), or Delegation for Military History Research, in Sweden. The grant will allow her to travel to Sweden in June 2024 to attend and present at the European Labour History Network (ELHN) conference at Uppsala University. Christine is a coordinator of the Military Labour History Working Group (MLHWG), which is part of the ELHN, and which will be contributing four Working Group panels and one joint panel, with the Maritime Labour History Working Group, to the conference. Her paper, "Visualising domestic and military masculinities in the work of military occupation", looks at how photographs as primary sources can reveal the multiple masculine performances of married Australian military men in the Occupation of Japan after the Asia Pacific War. It is planned that the presented paper will become a chapter in an edited book on visual sources and material artefacts in military labour history, to be edited by members of the MLHWG.

John Moses PhD

Publications

John A Moses; 'The muddled Anzac debate: would-be mentors of the nation and the struggle for balanced historical objectivity', *Queensland History Journal*, Volume 25, No. 6, August 2023.

John Moses, *Looking over the Fence: Reflections and Reminiscences of an Historian's Journey from the Australian Bush to a wider World* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing –Arcadia Imprint, 2023) pp. xxii + 307 ISBN 978-1-922669-97-1.

Upcoming — *Combating Totalitarianism: The Legacy of St Paul and Dietrich Bonhoeffer in the Struggle against the Murderous Utopias of Communism and National Socialism* (Wipf & Stock in Eugene, Oregon in 2024).

Trevor Parmenter AM, PhD

Presentation

Three day course via Zoom on *Positive Behaviour Support for participants who support people with disabilities in mainstream employment* in Singapore , 16 -18 October 2023.

Interview

University of New England Alumni Newsletter, September 2023. (Link: <https://tinyurl.com/ys8b9zkc>)

Susan Steggall PhD

Publication

Susan Steggall, 'Avengement', in *Villain or Hero?*, an anthology of short stories by members of the Northern Beaches Writers' Group, Zena Shapter (ed), NBWG Publishing, print & ebook , 2023.

Christine Yeats FRAHS

Publication

Christine Yeats, 'Henry, William Ernest (Bill) (1920–1998)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/henry-william-ernest-bill-32799/text40801>, published online 2023.

Board positions

Re-elected President of the Federation of Australian Historical Societies at the AGM held on 16 October.

Elected President of Graduate Women NSW on 18 November 2023.